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Book-collectors as benefactors of public libraries, by
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press) 1915.
66 p. ports. 25^{cm}
"Author's separate. 100 copies printed."
Reprinted for private distribution from Papers of the Bibliographical
society of America, vol. ix, no. 3-4.
Another copy in Flimpton Library. 1915.
Another copy in Rare Book Department. 1915.
1. Book collectors. 2. Libraries, Private. 1. Title.
78602 Library of Congress Z989.C75 16-2547
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INITIALS: MB

TRACKING #: MSH 20524

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Book-collectors as benefactors of public libraries

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BOOK-COLLECTORS AS
BENEFACTORS OF
PUBLIC LIBRARIES

By
GEORGE WATSON COLE

Reprinted for Private Distribution from Papers of
the Bibliographical Society of America
Volume IX, Nos. 3-4

CHICAGO
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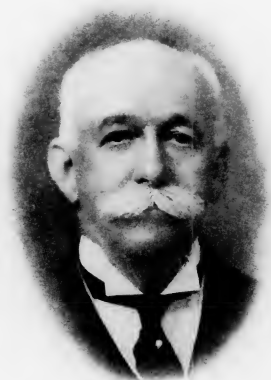
HENRY EDWARDS HUNTINGTON

BOOK-COLLECTORS AS BENEFACTORS OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES

BY GEORGE WATSON COLE

THE title of this paper is to be taken in its broadest sense. By the term "book-collectors" is meant not only those who are widely known because of their collections of books; but bibliophiles, lovers of books as beautiful specimens of the art preservative of arts; dilettanti, followers of a single branch of knowledge as a matter of pleasure or amusement; scholars, versed in learning; and, in fact, all for whom books are necessities, as much so as air, sunlight, and fire, or as their food, shelter, and clothing. Nor is the title to be limited in its application to those who have by their beneficence donated their collections to libraries, for it is our intention to include all who have been conservators of literature and learning. And finally, the term "public libraries" is not to be restricted to the meaning usually attached to those words, but is to be extended so as to include all libraries, whether public or private, that are so liberally administered that any well-accredited scholar may gain access to their treasures for the purpose of pursuing his investigations.

It might appear from what has been already said that the subject has been so enlarged as to include anything relating to book-lovers or books. A moment's consideration, however, will convince anyone that the subject is of too great an extent to permit of its being



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It might appear from what has been already said that the subject has been so enlarged as to include anything relating to book-lovers or books. A moment's consideration, however, will convince anyone that the subject is of too great an extent to permit of its being

treated except in a restricted way; for neither time nor space permits the inclusion of more than a few notable or typical examples.

Until about the middle of the fifteenth century the production of books was both costly and laborious, and was chiefly confined to the monasteries of Europe and Asia, where alone learning was cultivated. Such being the case, we find this industry almost exclusively confined to those religious communities where the few who were proficient in the art of writing or copying were patiently and peacefully employed in this calling, while their personal needs were provided for by other members of the community less fitted either by ability, training, or inclination than they for the patient and exacting work of the scrivener. Hence it was, in the nature of things, that the first libraries were mainly confined to religious houses and were composed of such volumes as had been written in them or secured by exchange. These libraries, as may be supposed, were naturally restricted to a limited number of subjects. First and most prominent of all were works of a religious nature, such as the Bible, liturgies, psalters, commentaries, and the lives of saints and martyrs. These, as time progressed, were naturally supplemented by the history of the religious world as found in the writings of the church Fathers, accounts of the various Councils, and the annals of the monasteries themselves. In some cases this monotony, especially after the diffusion of learning consequent upon

the capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453, was broken by the addition of the writings of the Greek and Latin classical authors. To these institutions we are indeed indebted for the preservation of nearly all of the literature, scholastic, theological, devotional, hymnic, and classical, that has come down to us from the remote periods of the past.

The first library in England was that carried thither by St. Augustine in the year 596. As might be expected it contained but a few volumes, nine in number, and all of a religious character. They were the Holy Bible, in two volumes, the Psalter, the Gospels, another Psalter, another copy of the Gospels, the [Apocryphal] Lives of the Apostles, the Lives of the Martyrs, and an Exposition of the Gospels and Epistles. This continued to be the only library in England for about seventy years, when, by the arrival of Theodore of Tarsus, in 669, "an extensive library," as the annalist informs us, was added to it. Some volumes believed to have been added at that time are still to be seen at Canterbury.

As the monasteries were, in those early times, the training-schools for the clergy and the nurseries for the missions, they became the prototypes of our present-day colleges and universities as well as of the libraries, which naturally belong to such institutions of learning. By gradual changes these community libraries have, in a long course of years, developed into or engendered those designed for the use of the public in general. First

in the order of development came subscription or mercantile libraries and later, to use Carlyle's term, the "people's university" or the free public library of the present day; a library supported entirely at the expense of the public.

The history of book-collecting carries us back to a period before the invention of printing. The pursuit was then confined to a few wealthy scholars and lovers of learning, who by reason of their superior advantages were enabled to form libraries for their individual use. Most prominent among the Englishmen of this period was Richard d'Aungerville, better known as Richard de Bury, Bishop of Durham and the author of *Philobiblon*. De Bury deservedly takes the first rank among the early bibliophiles of England, for he was not only a scholar but also a great promoter of learning. At Oxford he founded a library in connection with Durham College, known for several generations as "d'Aungerville's Library." It was dispersed on the dissolution of the monasteries during the days of Edward VI., though a few of its volumes are still preserved in the library of Balliol College.

Book-collecting was naturally greatly encouraged by the invention of printing. Books which previously had been very costly, because of the expense and time necessary for their production and of their limited numbers, became more abundant and consequently less expensive.

At a later period a great incentive was given to book-collecting in England by the dissolution of the monasteries from 1536 to 1539. Then it was that a few men foreseeing the great loss to learning that was likely to ensue from the bigoted and indiscriminate destruction of the books and manuscripts of the monastic libraries strove with all their might to rescue as many of them as possible from complete annihilation. "Every lover of books," says Fletcher in his *English Book Collectors*, "must feel how greatly indebted he is to Archbishops Cranmer and Parker, the Earl of Arundel, Lord Lumley, Sir Robert Cotton, and other early collectors, for saving so many of the priceless manuscripts from the libraries of the suppressed monasteries and religious houses which, at the Reformation, intolerance, ignorance, and greed consigned to the hands of the tailor, the goldbeater, and the grocer. A large number of the treasures once to be found in these collections have been irrecoverably lost, but many a volume, now the pride of some great library, bears witness to the pious and successful exertions of these eminent men."

We are reminded by the last sentence that book-collecting has been a pursuit almost invariably followed by men. The long lists of bibliophiles of every period and of every country are singularly devoid of women's names. Women have themselves not only not been book-collectors, but, what is still worse, they have been prominent as discouragers of book-collecting and have,

too often, even proved to be the enemies of books. A prominent example of this latter class is that of Lady Balcarres, the grandmother of the late Earl of Crawford, one of the most famous of latter-day book-collectors. The Lindsays have always been renowned as bibliophiles and at the time of which we write possessed one of the best libraries in Scotland. This library remained at the family seat on the shores of the Firth of Forth until comparatively recent times. When Lady Balcarres left Fife to establish her residence at Edinburgh, during the absence of her son in the West Indies, she permitted the greater part of the library to be "literally thrown away and dispersed—torn up for grocers as useless trash. . . . Of the library collected by generations of Lindsays, all that now remains is a handful of a little over fifty volumes."

We gladly turn from a picture so harrowing to another, unfortunately, however, almost a solitary example in the annals of book-collecting, in which a woman appears as an enthusiastic bibliophile. Frances Richardson Currer early evinced a fondness for books and collected a large and valuable library. In 1852 it was estimated to contain about 20,000 volumes and was rich in the natural sciences, topography, antiquities, and history, besides containing a fair collection of the Greek and Latin classics. All the books were in choice condition and many of them were in fine bindings. Miss Currer, who possessed a scholar's as well as a collector's love of books, privately printed two catalogues of her library. Dibdin in his



HUBERT HOWE BANCROFT

Bibliographical Tour, which he dedicated to her, devotes ten pages to a description of the literary and artistic treasures of this remarkable library and gives four steel engravings representing the exterior and book rooms of Eshton Hall. So highly did he regard her that he refers to her as being "at the head of all female collectors in Europe."

The motives which actuate book-collectors in the choice of a subject upon which to exercise their talent are various, but may be divided broadly into two classes. The first, and perhaps the most useful, is that which impels authors, scholars, bibliographers, and others to form collections of books as working-tools of their calling; collections in which subject-matter takes precedence over form, in which a cheap edition, if unabridged, answers as good a purpose as a more elegant one. The size of working libraries depends upon the extent of the subjects in which their collectors may be interested and on their pecuniary ability to add to them.

An interesting example of a large library of this kind is that formed by Mr. Hubert Howe Bancroft to supply material for his extensive history of the Pacific States of North America. This library, consisting of about 50,000 books, pamphlets, newspapers, maps, atlases, engravings, and original or copied manuscripts, is now owned by the University of California, having been bought by the state in 1905 or 1906. In his interesting, though very discursive, *Literary Industries*, Mr. Bancroft tells us how,



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when his bookselling and publishing house was preparing the *Hand-Book Almanac* for publication in 1860, it occurred to him to gather all the books, pamphlets, etc., in his stock and place them on shelves near where the work was going on. Similar works were then secured from the shelves of other San Francisco dealers. Later, during a trip to New York, Philadelphia, and Boston, he added to his collection by going through the second-hand stores and book-stalls of dealers in those cities. Those of London and Paris were, at a still later period, systematically examined for anything helping to enlarge the collection. From books and pamphlets the search was at length extended to manuscripts of the early Spanish missions in California. If the originals of these could not be secured copies were carefully made and these added to the collection. While this work was going on there were many of the old Spanish and English settlers still living in California; pioneers whose memories ran back to the early settlement of the country. These men were interviewed. Some were persuaded to write out their recollections, others were induced to dictate them to Mr. Bancroft's secretaries, and thus, piece by piece, was accumulated a mass of priceless material, which, had it not been for Mr. Bancroft's sagacious enterprise and foresight, would have forever been lost to history. From time to time, as occasion offered, many valuable books relating to his subject were secured at auction sales; notably from those of the Andrade-Maximilian, Squier, and Ramirez libraries.

The late Dr. Reuben Gold Thwaites, who was called upon, by the Regents of the University of California, in 1905, to examine this library with a view of ascertaining its condition and marketable value, reported that he found it "a practically unique collection . . . of the highest order of excellence, . . . a great storehouse of material for all of Spanish America," which will afford facilities for graduate work in American and Spanish-American history "unsurpassed elsewhere in the United States."

That Mr. Bancroft was enabled to collect a library of such great value to the historical student was due to his sagacity and practical common-sense, traits of which he has given evidence in the following words: "Book collecting to be worthy of esteem should have some definite object consistent with usefulness. Fine bindings or rare editions, while interesting, are of less importance than subject-matter. Without the latter, collections of books take rank with those of old china, furniture, or other relics gathered with no practical purpose in view." In another place he says: "A collection of books, like everything else, has its history and individuality. Particularly is this the case in regard to collections limited to a special subject, time, or territory. Such collections are the result of birth and growth; they are not found in the market for sale, ready made; there must have been sometime the engendering idea, followed by a long natural development."

Another group of libraries is brought together from a quite distinct class of motives: that group of libraries formed by bibliophiles and dilettanti to gratify their aesthetic tastes and the pleasure of possession. Books in such libraries are looked upon more as objects of elegance and curiosity than for their usefulness. In such a collection the substance upon which a book is printed or written, its format, beauty and clearness of type, elegance of binding, the quality and number of its illustrations or embellishments, its association interest, and a thousand and one other extraneous matters count for far more than its consideration purely as a work of literature. A collection brought together solely to exemplify such features is not a library but is rather a collection of materials appropriate to grace a bibliothecal museum.

The highest form of book-collecting is undoubtedly found where the collector combines excellence of literary quality with rarity and sumptuousness of form. The Grenville Collection, now in the British Museum, is one of the most notable of such libraries ever collected by a single individual.

The Right Honourable Thomas Grenville, after having for many years filled various important offices under the English government, retired in April, 1807, when a little over fifty years of age. In 1800 he had been made Chief Justice in Eyre to the South of the Trent, a sinecure office yielding him an annual income of £2,000. This office, of which he was the last incumbent,

he held until his death, December 17, 1846, at the advanced age of ninety-one years. After his retirement from active office he spent the remaining forty years of his life in the collection of the magnificent library that bears his name and which is one of the great glories of the British Museum. The fact that this library was principally purchased with the profits of the sinecure office which he held for so many years led him, as "a debt to duty," to bequeath it to the nation.

In his report on the accessions to the Museum for the year 1847 Sir Anthony Panizzi, the librarian, says: "With exception of the Collection of His Majesty George the Third, the Library of the British Museum has never received an accession so important in every respect as the Collection of the Right Honourable Thomas Grenville. . . . Formed and preserved with the exquisite taste of an accomplished bibliographer, with the learning of a profound and elegant scholar, and the splendid liberality of a gentleman in affluent circumstances, . . . this addition to the National Library places it in some respects above all libraries known, in others it leaves it inferior only to the Royal Library at Paris." Its volumes are perhaps as fully distinguished for the uniform beauty of their condition and the splendor of their bindings as for their great rarity.

In our own country the library collected by the late Elihu Dwight Church, now owned by Mr. Henry Edwards Huntington, is distinguished quite as fully for the admirable condition of its volumes as for their great rarity.

The library of the late Robert Hoe was likewise renowned for the rarity of its volumes and the elegance of their bindings. A due, even an excessive, regard for perfection of condition and beauty of bindings needs not therefore be inconsistent with the formation of a library brought together to illustrate some great period of history or literature, or to show the advance made in the arts or sciences.

In these days when the printing-press fairly spawns with books of every description, each year adding innumerable works in every field of knowledge to those of the past, the collector is compelled by the very mass of material at his disposal to limit his activities to a circumscribed field. Here in America, where our history runs back to but little over four hundred years, or to within a few years of the invention of printing, collectors are usually content to select some field in which the printed book forms almost the complete object of their search. Still, we have a few collectors of manuscripts. Prominent among these are Mr. William Keeney Bixby, of St. Louis, and the late Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan. Mr. Bixby's collection is, if we are correctly informed, restricted to subjects of American interest. He has from time to time published some of his most interesting and important manuscripts. Mr. Morgan's collection, more extensive in scope, embraces the original autograph manuscripts of many celebrated works of English and American literature, prominent among them being the

First Book of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, several of the Waverley Novels, *et cetera*. The manuscripts in the Bancroft collection, comprising 1,400 or 1,500 volumes, have already been referred to.

Of English collectors, John Forster, the biographer and literary adviser of Charles Dickens, so far took advantage of his confidential relations with the noted novelist that the most important manuscripts of that writer passed into his possession. They are now to be seen in the South Kensington Museum with the rest of Forster's library, which he bequeathed to the British nation.

Early specimens of printing, known as incunabula or cradle books, are very attractive to certain collectors. The term "incunabula," usually restricted to books printed in Europe down to and including the year 1500, with us has been extended to include those printed in the English and Spanish colonies in America for a period two hundred years later. The first Spanish press in America was set up in Mexico about 1541, almost identically a hundred years before the appearance of the first book printed in the English colonies, the *Bay Psalm Book*, published at Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1640. The collector of Americana, if he is wise, never loses an opportunity of adding to his library any book or pamphlet printed in North or South America prior to and including the year 1700. Books falling under this description are by no means equally rare or valuable. Much depends upon

their character, condition, and the printer. Notwithstanding this the alert collector thinks twice before letting even a shabby copy pass beyond his reach.

Mr. Henry Stevens, in his *Recollections of Mr. James Lenox*, says that after an experience of some forty years in hunting for books, he had observed that the rarest works of Americana seldom appeared in the market more than once. William Carew Hazlitt, in his *Confessions of a Collector*, repeatedly mentions the titles of books of early English poetry and drama that came to his notice during a period of about the same length, but of which he had never seen second copies. John Hill Burton, on the contrary, in his *Book-Hunter* says: "It is a curious phenomenon in the old-book trade that rarities do not always remain rare; volumes seeming to multiply through some cryptogamic process, when we know perfectly that no additional copies are printed and thrown off. The fact is the rumor of scarcity, and value, and a hunt after them draws them from their hiding place."

An interesting example of a case in point came under our observation a few years ago. A young Pennsylvania school-teacher appeared one day at the store of a firm of dealers in rare books on Fifth Avenue with a copy of a very old *New England Primer* that he had picked up somewhere near his home. Being of limited means, but ambitious withal, he proposed, by disposing of this copy of the *Primer*, to secure enough money to take an advanced course of training in an eastern college. The firm interviewed one of its customers with such good

results that the school teacher soon went his way a happy man. This, like most eighteenth-century copies of the *New England Primer*, proved to be unique. Though edition after edition of this book was printed in the English colonies, particularly in Boston, during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and their sales ran into the hundreds of thousands, as shown by Paul Leicester Ford, so much were they thumbed and worn that many editions were, without doubt, totally destroyed and but occasional copies of others have survived, most of them in a very shabby condition.

The circumstances under which the Pennsylvania copy of the *Primer* changed hands and the price it brought having been heralded in the public press, the booksellers who effected the sale were for weeks overrun with letters from all parts of the country by owners of other *New England Primers* all eager to sell at fabulous prices. Of course most of these, from a collector's standpoint, were entirely worthless, but from among them a few were found of sufficient age to make them desirable. Enough of these were secured by Mr. Church so that, with those he already possessed, he became the happy possessor of seven of the eleven earliest known editions. None of the extant copies of *The New England Primer*, however, are of a sufficiently early date to entitle them to be classed as American incunabula.

Of this latter class of books, particularly of books printed in the English colonies in America, no library

probably possesses so large a collection as that of the Massachusetts Historical Society. Dr. Samuel A. Green in his *Early American Imprints*, a new edition of which is in preparation, has minutely described all that have come under his eye. The collection of the late Mr. Church contained many New England and New York imprints none of which are of greater value and rarity than one of his last acquisitions, a copy of the Massachusetts Laws printed at Cambridge, in 1648. Students of early Massachusetts history had for over a century known that such an edition was printed, but were quite unable to locate a copy. So exact and definite was their information respecting it that by putting together contemporary quotations and references they were almost able to reconstitute the volume, but every effort to trace a copy proved fruitless. The discovery of the one now in the Church-Huntington collection has an interesting history. A collector of music, near Cambridge, England, learning of a book in which some old music was bound, succeeded in securing it. From it he extracted the music for which he had bought the volume. The music itself being of more than usual interest, he retained the remnant of the old volume, in which he had found it, to show his friends, as the source from which he had procured the music. Most of those looking it over saw among the rejected matter a few pages of laws, but as the imprint was merely "Cambridge, 1648," gave the matter but little thought, supposing them to have been printed at Cambridge, England. At length someone more dis-

cerning than his fellows suggested that these leaves might be valuable. The attention of a London dealer being called to them, negotiations ensued which finally resulted in the volume being sent to New York where it soon passed into the possession of Mr. Church, by whom it was regarded as one of the most precious of his many treasures.

Of European incunabula, no library probably possesses so many as the British Museum, of which a catalogue is being issued under the able editorship of Mr. Alfred W. Pollard. There are several well-known collections in this country, that of the Philadelphia Public Library being one of the most important. The collection which General Rush Hawkins, of New York, spent many years in bringing together is especially rich and complete in its copies of first issues from the presses of the earliest European printers. This collection is now in a beautiful building in Providence, Rhode Island, that General Hawkins has erected as a memorial to his wife, Annmary Brown. Mr. Pollard, who was engaged in 1909 to come to this country and catalogue it, expressed great surprise at finding it so astonishingly rich and in the possession of so many books not to be found in the British Museum. It contains 150 books from the possible 238 presses set up in Europe before 1501. The late John Boyd Thacher, of Albany, also possessed a remarkably fine collection of incunabula.

Mr. Adolph Sutro, of San Francisco, in a letter, dated September 5, 1895, offering a site for the Affiliated

Colleges of the University of California, expressed his intention of founding a large reference library adjoining it in the city of San Francisco. Unfortunately he died before carrying his designs into effect. He had for several years previously been extensively engaged in buying books and had accumulated probably the largest library ever collected by any single individual. His own estimate, which has been confirmed by his private secretary, placed the number of volumes at about 300,000. Of these but about one-third now remain, the rest having been destroyed in the fire of 1906 which followed the San Francisco earthquake. This library contained a great number of incunabula, perhaps one of the largest collections in private hands, it being estimated by Mr. Sutro himself to contain over 4,000 volumes. Those from European presses were acquired in the purchase of the library of the monastery of Buxheim, which was secured *en bloc*. To these he added the duplicates of the Royal Library of Munich. To Mr. Sutro's estimate should no doubt be added a considerable number of early Mexican imprints, for he made extensive purchases of books in that country, at one time bringing away two closely-packed carloads. A greater part of the Mexican books escaped the fire, being stored in a block on Montgomery Street. The European incunabula, deposited with the most valuable portion of the collection in a building on Battery Street, were unfortunately burned. The remains of this immense collection has recently been presented by the heirs of the Sutro estate to the state of

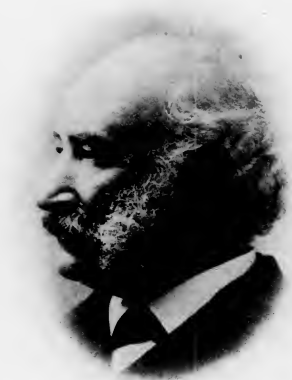


ADOLPH SUTRO

California with the provision that it shall remain in San Francisco. Mr. Sutro was a profound student of his fellow-men and thoroughly understood the subjection of the human will to the hypnotic influence of gold. When searching for books he always carried about with him a generous supply of it, and, if negotiations for purchase flagged, broke down all opposition to a consummation of the transfer by a free display of the alluring metal.

It has been the ambition of some collectors to bring together the works of a single author, in all their various editions. A notable example of a collection of this character is the Cervantes library, now in the British Museum. It is certainly the finest library of its kind outside of Spain, and perhaps the finest in the world. It was brought together by Henry Spencer Ashbee and was, together with his other books, consisting of over 15,000 volumes, bequeathed by him to the English national library. His *Iconography of Don Quixote*, the fruit of many years' labor, was published by the Bibliographical Society of London in 1895.

Another example of a collection of this kind is that of the different editions of Petrarch formed by Domenico de Rossetti and given by him to the Town Library of Trieste. His library contained about 7,000 volumes, among them being 772 of Petrarch's works, 123 of the works of Pope Pius II. (Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, author, and benefactor of the Vatican Library), and 750 volumes illustrative of the works of those authors, or



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It has been the ambition of some collectors to bring together the works of a single author, in all their various editions. A notable example of a collection of this character is the Cervantes library, now in the British Museum. It is certainly the finest library of its kind outside of Spain, and perhaps the finest in the world. It was brought together by Henry Spencer Ashbee and was, together with his other books, consisting of over 15,000 volumes, bequeathed by him to the English national library. His *Iconography of Don Quixote*, the fruit of many years' labor, was published by the Bibliographical Society of London in 1895.

Another example of a collection of this kind is that of the different editions of Petrarch formed by Domenico de Rossetti and given by him to the Town Library of Trieste. His library contained about 7,000 volumes, among them being 772 of Petrarch's works, 123 of the works of Pope Pius II. (Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, author, and benefactor of the Vatican Library), and 750 volumes illustrative of the works of those authors, or

1,645 volumes in all. The portion relating to Petrarch was, on the whole, unrivaled at that time. It was Rossetti's ambition to collect every known edition of Petrarch as it has later been that of the custodians of the collection to add to it everything that escaped him or has since appeared, so that it may ultimately contain everything by or relating to that famous author.

Some bibliophiles are satisfied to restrict their collecting to first editions. It is certainly interesting to see the work of an author as it left his hands and in the form in which he first saw it in print. But we are disposed to question the advisability of limiting collecting to *first* editions. Authors, as is well known, are seldom satisfied to let the creations of their brains go down to posterity as they originally see the light. This being the case, it would certainly seem more reasonable to collect the last edition with which an author had to do than the first, or, better still, to collect all the editions which appeared under his personal supervision. It is seldom that the public is admitted to an author's confidence so far as to be made acquainted with the circumstances attending the original conception of a work and the progressive steps of its growth until it finally appears in printed form.

In lieu of such confidences, there are occasional instances in which we are able to trace changes in the form and character of a work by a critical comparison of the various editions printed during its author's lifetime. Milton's *Paradise Lost*, as it first appeared, was

divided into ten instead of twelve books. Published at a time of great political agitation and literary stagnation, it sold slowly and its publisher, in order to dispose of his stock in hand, printed no fewer than six different title-pages and several pages of prefatory matter before he was able to dispose of the last copy. The second edition was divided into twelve books, a few lines being altered or added at the proper places to effect the necessary transformation.

The first edition of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* fell so far short of its author's designs that he made extensive additions to it in the second and third editions. John Stuart Mill in his interesting *Autobiography* informs us that his *Principles of Political Economy* was twice completely recast and rewritten before assuming its final form. The first edition therefore may be, doubtless is, a curiosity; but justice to the author requires that the collector of the first editions of Mill's work should at least have this work as it last left his pen. If, therefore, the collector is determined to confine himself to a single edition, he should, in our judgment, select the last that appeared during its author's lifetime—the last with his final emendations, alterations, and additions.

Editions whether the first, the last, or all that were published during the lifetime of the author are not necessarily the best. By this term we mean the best textually—the best annotated or variorum edition—quite a different thing from the most luxurious edition though they may be concurrent. The former of course

appeals to the scholarly collector; the latter to one controlled chiefly by his artistic tastes.

Just here we approach the supreme crux of English literature—the purification of the Shakespearian text. Numerous able scholars, beginning with Nicholas Rowe, have been at work for over two hundred years to evolve a satisfactory text of the plays of Shakespeare from the Quartos and Folios which appeared during and after the life of the great dramatist, and yet we still have “no absolutely authoritative text.” This task has been rendered extremely difficult from the fact that none of the contemporaneous editions were issued by Shakespeare himself or with his sanction and that they were carelessly and surreptitiously printed with little or no supervision. The Cambridge Edition (1863–66), edited by William George Clark, John Glover, and William Aldis Wright, was “the great event of the nineteenth century” in this field of scholarship and their “text is taken as the basis of most of the popular editions, whose name is legion.” Our great American Shakespearian scholar, Dr. Horace Howard Furness, in his monumental Variorum Edition sometimes follows the text of the Folios, sometimes that of the Cambridge Edition. An able writer upon *Shakespeare and His Critics*, Professor Charles Frederick Johnson, speaking of this failure to establish an authoritative text acceptable to all Shakespearian scholars, says: “There is, however, no absolutely authoritative text, nor is it likely that there ever will be one, unless a committee of the leading scholars of England, Germany, and America

were formed to deliberate, exchange views, and vote on all disputed points. It is not likely that such a body will ever be formed; and, even if it should be, the results of the labors of the revisers of the English Bible give no surety that the decision of the majority would be acceptable to the great body of the lovers of Shakespeare.” The collector of early English literature is therefore placed in a peculiar position. As a collector of first and early editions of Shakespeare he must secure all the Quartos possible, say down to 1709, and the four Folios with their variants. To these, if he does not wish to incur his collection with a vast mass of Shakespearian literature—an extensive library in itself—he is bound to add some good critical edition with the best available text, presumably the Cambridge Edition.

Few, we are inclined to believe, will be willing to confess that they do not like best an edition of a work in which the text is embellished and enriched with appropriate and artistic illustrations. It is not surprising, therefore, that there are numerous collectors who confine their energies to amassing illustrated books, particularly those embellished by famous artists, or extra-illustrated books, both of which have their devotees. A collection of books illustrative of the history of engraving in its various forms, or of book-illustration as a special form of art, is not only interesting but highly instructive.

Those works of Albrecht Dürer that appeared engraved upon wood take on added interest when we consider

that they were executed four hundred years ago and that the results were attained by cutting on the side of the block instead of on its end as now. Coming down to the early years of the last century and examining the work of Thomas Bewick, the restorer of wood engraving in England, we find an entire change of method. Bewick was the first wood engraver to make use of the end of a block instead of its side—to engrave instead of carve. He, also, was the inventor of the white line, formed by cutting away the wood instead of leaving it in relief, by which he secured a delicacy of result not met with previous to his day and unattained by any of his followers.

The works of the masters of caricature and of the grotesque have always been favorites with certain collectors. No artist of this class probably ever enjoyed a longer period of activity and enjoyed such success as George Cruikshank, whose illustrations of the Grimm Brother's *Fairy Stories* mark the zenith of his powers, though he continued to produce good work for a full half-century longer. He illustrated numerous other books, among them Dickens' *Oliver Twist*, which, in his overmastering conceit, occasioned him to make the audacious claim that he had given Dickens the entire idea of that work or at least the best ideas contained in it. That Dickens wrote the story from Cruikshank's illustrations or even followed his suggestions no one ever seriously believed, notwithstanding the vehemence of Cruikshank's claims to the contrary.

There is, however, a notable as well as an exceptional case in which the artist may truly be said to have been the author of his books, in which the illustrations were furnished to have the text written to correspond to them. We refer, of course, to William Rowlandson, the English caricaturist, who during the early part of the last century executed a series of illustrations which were given to William Combe, who wrote the accompanying verses. This unusual collaboration resulted in the production of *Dr. Syntax's Tour in Search of the Picturesque*. The work was issued in parts and attained such popularity that Rowlandson and Combe together produced several other works, two of which continued the *Tours* of Dr. Syntax until that remarkable character's death. The success of this collaboration led to many imitations some of which in style and execution are difficult to distinguish from Rowlandson's own work.

Much more might be said of various other interesting phases of collecting but time and space preclude our giving them further attention. It is entertaining and instructive to note the different methods employed by collectors in obtaining their books. John Hill Burton in his *Book-Hunter* tersely divides book-collectors into "private prowlers and auction-hunters." Time was when the private prowler rummaged the book-stalls and often picked up nuggets, at what now seems ridiculously low prices, but which have since become priceless possessions. Who would not now, in the light of present

knowledge, enjoy the opportunity of picking from Quaritch's penny-box a copy of the first edition of Fitzgerald's translation of the *Rubáiyát* of Omar Khayyám, a book which has, on more than one occasion, sold for \$250. Such opportunities may now be met with, but it takes shrewd discernment to extract future diamonds from among present-day rubbish.

Books that do not immediately meet with a ready sale when first published may often be picked up at a trivial price as remainders, but the value of second-hand books is now better known by dealers than formerly, and once a book passes into their hands the collector can secure it only by paying a good round price. The profitable and lucky days of the book prowler are numbered, though indeed we occasionally hear of a veritable nugget coming to light in some out-of-the-way place.

The opportunities enjoyed by George Brinley during our Civil War for making his marvelous collection of Americana were extraordinary and are never likely to be repeated. Mr. Brinley lived at Hartford, Connecticut, in the midst of a country abounding with small paper mills. During the war, prices of all commodities rose to unprecedented heights, and among them those of old books, pamphlets, newspapers, etc., which were used by the mills as paper-stock to be converted into new paper. In consequence of these high prices the thrifty New England housewives recollected that in their garrets were stored many old and disused books, pamphlets, and newspapers, the accumulations, in many cases, of several

generations. The opportunity of turning to use this mass of material, which seemed to them like so much lumber, was too strong to be resisted. Down came the storings of many years, and on the next visit of the itinerant tin-peddler they were exchanged for new tin- and woodenware and other household articles. Mr. Brinley, one the shrewdest of shrewd New Englanders, saw his opportunity and made arrangements with the peddlers and paper mills by which he was enabled to secure such books, pamphlets, and other papers as he might select, at a slight advance above the price for which they had been acquired. By improving this extraordinary opportunity, one that can never, in the very nature of things, be repeated, Mr. Brinley brought together one of the largest, most valuable, and rare collections of native Americana ever accumulated in this country. By pursuing this method he rescued many works, which, but for his foresight, would have certainly disappeared from the face of the earth. This accounts for the great number of duplicates that were sold in his library and for the many items which have not reappeared in any subsequent sale.

Quite a different method of collecting was that pursued by George John, the Second Earl Spencer, the celebrated English book-collector. He was accustomed to make bibliographical tours on the Continent with his librarian, Thomas Frognall Dibdin, for the purpose of perfecting certain portions of his collection. His tour in 1819 and that of 1820 resulted in his making many

important additions to his library from various sources and in his buying the entire collection of the Duke of Cassano-Serra, eminently rich in *Quattrocentisti*—books printed before 1501. Modern methods of communication have rendered such tours no longer necessary, as the catalogues of dealers now speedily find their way to the hands of collectors in all parts of the world.

It not infrequently happens that a collector is able, as in the case of Lord Spencer, just noticed, to obtain a collection already formed, which for one reason or another has found its way into the market. One of the most recent and important transfers of this kind took place in 1905 when the library of Frederick Locker-Lampson, rich in early English poetry and drama, was purchased by the late Mr. Church. Previous to this transaction Mr. Church had secured the finest collection of the Folio editions of Shakespeare ever brought together, containing as it did eleven of the twelve varieties of the Four Folios. He also had a very choice collection of the Quarto editions of the separate plays and poems. Of the latter there were many in the Locker-Lampson library not in his collection. The acquisition of these at once placed the Church collection of Shakespeare's works foremost among those in this country and fifth among those either here or in England. Only one other private collection, that of the Duke of Devonshire, which has recently followed the Locker-Lampson Quartos to this country and now sits cheek-by-jowl with it upon Mr. Huntington's shelves, contained a greater number of the

Quartos printed before 1623, the year when the First Folio was published. Public libraries containing larger collections than either of these are the Bodleian Library, the British Museum, and, possibly, the Capell Collection at Trinity College, Cambridge, each ranking in the order given.

The collector of the present day still enjoys two sources of supply nearly as old as the history of book-collecting: the dealer in rare and second-hand books and the auction-room. These two sources practically reduce themselves to one—the dealer—for it is to the auction-room that the dealer himself resorts as one of the most fruitful sources for the replenishment of his stock in trade. By placing himself in the hands of a reputable dealer the collector possesses advantages unknown to the mere "private prowler" or the "auction-hunter." The intelligent dealer soon comes to recognize his customer's individual tastes and narrowly watches the market in order that he may cater to them. Having customers of varied interests, the dealer has greater opportunities than the collector can possibly possess for knowing what may at any particular moment be in the market. The constant exchange of catalogues between booksellers keeps them fully informed upon this point. Dealers in all parts of the world thus know in what markets certain classes of books are to be found and where they are most in demand. Naturally when any collection rises in importance above the average it becomes widely known and the entire world is, as it were, laid under contribution to supply it

with the books it lacks. Such collections are like magnets, the larger they become the more powerfully they attract to themselves like or allied matter. Such a collector, therefore, soon comes to have the first choice of everything in the market that falls within the scope of his collection.

After all quality rather than quantity determines the value and excellence of any collection. Henry Stevens if not directly responsible for the term "nuggets," as applied to rare books, so far popularized the expression as to make it more closely associated with his name than with that of any other. The term is peculiarly appropriate. Books are like gems, and, literally so in many cases, as in these latter days, many a book has been sold for far more than its actual weight in gold. No dealers were better aware of the rarity and value of this class of books than those princes of booksellers, Henry Stevens and Bernard Quaritch, who devoted their lives to the search of bibliographical treasures for their patrons. Mr. Quaritch is said to have exclaimed to someone who, gazing about his shop, asked him how he knew the prices of all the books on his shelves: "The prices! why my dear sir, I make them."

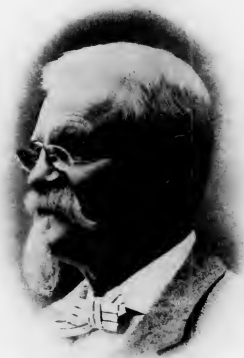
The Capell Collection of Shakespeare Folios and Quartos, especially the latter, was formed by that distinguished commentator to assist him in elucidating the text of the great playwright. It was brought together at a time when those little pamphlets could be secured



ELIHU DWIGHT CHURCH

for as many pence or shillings as they now command pounds or hundreds of pounds. Two years before his death he gave his library to Trinity College, Cambridge, where it is now treasured as one of its most priceless possessions.

Both the collection of Americana and that of Early English Literature formed by the late Mr. Church were not great in the sense that they contained a large number of volumes. It was rather the rarity and the historical and literary importance of these few volumes that caused his library to become one of national importance. In a collection superabounding in rarities it seems invidious to select any for special mention, but it may not be without interest to refer to a few of its most prominent gems. First of all it contains copies of every early edition of the letter by Christopher Columbus announcing his discovery of America, not locked up in public libraries. Among these was the First Edition in Latin. Its collection of works relating to American Vesputius is also especially complete, containing, as it does, four of the five editions of the *Paesi Novamente Ritrovati*, "the most important collection of voyages, and, in the absence of the *Libretto* of Vercellese, now lost, the earliest." Of the Cortes letters announcing the conquest of Mexico it has all the early editions in Spanish and Latin, and, in addition, the unique French edition of the first and second letters. In addition to the well-known editions giving an account of Magellan's voyage around the world, it contains one printed at Paris of which no other copy, so far known, is



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in existence. The collection of works describing Fro-bisher's attempts to discover the Northwest Passage is probably the finest ever brought together outside of the great national libraries. The nine tracts of Las Casas are all present, one being represented by two editions. The sets of the collections of voyages and travels published by De Bry and Hulsius are among the very finest and most complete in existence and are those which Henry Stevens spent the greater part of his life in collecting and perfecting. No other private library, if indeed any public library, possesses so fine a collection of the early pamphlets relating to the settlement of the English colonies in North America; those concerning Virginia, New England, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey being exceptionally fine both because of their number and because of their extreme rarity. Its sets of the *Jesuit Relations* and other works relating to Nouvelle France, or Canada, are also very complete. The number of its earliest imprints of the presses of Cambridge, Boston, and New York would of themselves, alone, give distinction to any collection. Its sets of the writings of the Mathers, Increase and Cotton, as well as those of other members of that distinguished family, are particularly full, and contain all of the rarest works of those eminent Boston divines. Of almanacs it contains an exceptionally valuable collection including the first issues printed in Cambridge and New York and a very full and complete set of Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanac*. The number and rarity of its *New England Primers* easily place it at the

head of all collections of "The Little Bible of New England."

Much more might be said of this unsurpassed collection of Americana, but, in passing, a word should be said regarding the Church Collection of Early English Literature and Miscellanea. The Shakespeare portion, its most important feature, has already been mentioned. It also contains very complete sets of the early editions of Spencer, Milton, Bunyan, and Butler. Here are also to be found the first editions of many other masterpieces of English literature. Of Bacon's *Essays* it contains the first two editions. Here are also Gray's *Elegy*, Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, and a host of other works, in the form in which they first left the press and greeted the gratified eyes of their illustrious authors. The first editions of later writers, such as Charles Lamb, Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley Novels*, Dickens, and Thackeray, are unusually complete and interesting. Of the works of the great illustrators and engravers Bewick, Cruikshank, and Rowlandson it contains very full sets.

Such is the Church-Huntington Collection. To it, since its acquisition, Mr. Huntington has made large and exceedingly important additions, and, if report is to be credited, his library is now probably the finest, rarest, and most valuable private library in existence. Additions of such importance have been made possible by a combination of circumstances which have afforded an opportunity such as seldom, if ever, has fallen to the lot of

any other collector. The death of Robert Hoe and that of Alfred H. Huth and the dispersal of their libraries by auction, together with his previous purchase of the collection of Mr. Beverly Chew, and the later acquisition of the Duke of Devonshire's library, have enabled Mr. Huntington to add to his collection an immense number of the very rarest items in early English literature, as well as of those in other fields in which he is interested.

Quality rather than quantity is after all the proper standard by which the value of a library should be determined. No library however large can fail to contain some works of value. Whenever a large collection of books is mentioned our minds instinctively turn to that of Richard Heber, the great English bibliomaniac, with his eight houses full of books; four in England, and others in Paris, Antwerp, Brussels, and Ghent, not to mention smaller hoards in other parts of the Continent. With Heber book-collecting was not a taste but a voracious passion. He bought whole libraries, purchasing once in Paris one of 30,000 volumes. Large paper copies he detested because they took up too much shelf-room. He was in the habit of buying copy after copy of the same book and was very liberal in lending his books and in otherwise aiding scholars who wished to make use of them. "Of many books," says Fletcher, in his *English Book Collectors*, "he possessed several copies, and on being asked by a friend why he purchased them, he seriously replied: 'Why, you see, Sir, no man can comfortably



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do without *three* copies of a book. One he must have for his show copy, and he will probably keep it at his country house. Another he will require for his own use and reference; and unless he is inclined to part with this, which is very inconvenient, or risk the injury of his best copy, he must needs have a third at the service of his friends."

His library was dispersed after his death at several sales in London and on the Continent extending over a period of 216 days. It has been estimated to contain 146,827 volumes, not including an immense number of pamphlets and an unknown quantity stored on the Continent, and was supposed to have cost him about £100,000. The English sales realized £56,774, while his books, coins, and drawings, sold on the Continent, brought about £10,000 more.

Large as was Heber's collection, it has been surpassed by others. The famous Zaluski collection, "made in the lifetime by one Polish bishop [Andreas Stanislav Zaluski] with the assistance of another [his youngest brother, Josef Andrei Zaluski], was," says Edwards, "the largest Collection ever made at private expense . . . [and] . . . actually surpassed in numbers the magnificent Library of the Kings of France, and was at the head, in that point, of all the Collections of Europe, some of which had been gathering for centuries at the expense of nations." The first beginnings of this library, collected by several members of the Zaluski family, can be traced back to the early part of the seventeenth century.

It was opened to public use at Warsaw (August 8, 1748) with an endowment for its support and increase. Count Josef Andrei Zaluski, who desired to make it a complete repository both of Polish literature and of the materials of Polish history, made great additions to it. By 1770 he had so far succeeded in his purpose that he had really brought under one roof about all that was known to exist in print about Poland. By his will, made in 1761, he bequeathed the collection and the house containing it to the Jesuit College at Warsaw, in trust for the public. The Jesuits being suppressed in 1773, a year before his death, the library passed to the management of the Commissioner of Education appointed by the Polish government and remained in Warsaw until the partition of Poland. Though Poland was assigned to Prussia its literary treasures became the spoil of the Empress of Russia. In 1796, after considerable losses, the collection was transferred to St. Petersburg, where, according to the official returns made as the work of transportation proceeded, 262,640 volumes and 24,573 prints were actually received and counted. This was the first important accession to the Imperial Library of Russia whose foundations had already been laid. A full account of the formation of the Zaluski library and of the Imperial Public Library at St. Petersburg (now Petrograd) by Theodore W. Koch can be found in *The Library Journal*, vol. 40 (1915).

It should not be overlooked that the Zaluski library was not the collection of a single individual, though the

elder brother's part in gathering it was comparatively insignificant, and, hence, perhaps it should not be placed in comparison, because of its size, with Heber's. Still it is not unlikely that a greater number of volumes was collected by Bishop Zaluski, the founder of the collection, than was made by Heber, especially as at one time it was said to contain 400,000 volumes. The great collection formed by Adolph Sutro, if his own estimate and that of others is to be credited, before the destruction of one-half or more of it in the San Francisco disaster of 1906, surpassed in numbers any collection ever formed by any one person, with the possible exception of the Zaluski library. After Heber's collection that of Count Otho de Thott (*b.* 1703, *d.* 1785), the eminent Danish statesman, bequeathed in 1785 to the Royal Library of Denmark, probably should be placed next in rank. It contained 121,915 volumes and 4,159 manuscripts and was in the judgment of Brunet, the celebrated French bibliographer, who seems to have been unaware of the Zaluski library, the most considerable collection of books ever brought together by one individual.

The lives of book-collectors show, in numerous instances, that the zeal of their pursuit has not been without intervals of relaxation during which they lost opportunities which they were never afterward able to retrieve. Mr. Stevens in his *Recollections of Mr. James Lenox* says: "The world outside of book-hunting may smile at [the] eagerness for the first choice, but such

a smile of pity will most likely vanish away into complaisance on becoming acquainted with the fact that after forty years' experience in sighting and chasing book-rarities, I found that a very large number of the choicest historical and bibliographical nuggets relating to the 'Age of Discovery,' with the exploration and development of the New World, occurred but once in my time, in the market for sale. Happy he who became the winner in such a chase!"

A too great particularity as to condition has also been known to result in the rejection of copies to the lasting regret of the collector who had them but once within his grasp. A few years ago a number of early Cambridge imprints were offered to Mr. Church and refused because of their shabby condition. He never afterward ceased to regret that he had not taken in these precious but ragged wanderers. As already remarked, Hazlitt noticed in his long experience as a collector that many books of early English poetry and drama appeared but once in the market.

The temporary inactivity of a collector, as well as his lack of appreciation of a nugget which has been offered him, is an opportunity often eagerly seized upon by a rival. Stevens tells us how he sent shipments of Americana to John Carter Brown for first choice after which the remainder was in turn forwarded to Mr. Lenox and later to George Brinley. He mentions periods, especially during the War of the Rebellion, when Mr. Lenox "suspended generally his ardent foraging for rare books, and



JAMES LENOX

only occasionally had an intermittent attack of his old bibliographical fever." Whatever may have been the cause of the abatement of Mr. Lenox's ardor in collecting, it could hardly have been that suggested by Hazlitt when speaking of similar cessations from buying in the case of Henry Huth. Mr. Lenox was a bachelor, Mr. Huth, on the contrary, was a man with a family, a fact which makes all the difference in the world. Mr. Hazlitt says: "Mr Huth was not only vacillating in his pursuit of books, and so missed many which he ought to have secured, but his health began to fail some time prior to his decease. . . . I suspect that the cause of wavering was one which is common to so many collectors in all departments, and leads in a majority of instances to the abrupt dispersion of the property. I allude to the almost ostentatious indifference of relatives and friends to the treasures, unless, perhaps, they are pictures or china, which a man gathers round him. In this instance £120,000 [\$600,000] had been expended in books, mss, drawings and prints, and the worthy folks who came to the house, what did they know about them? what did they care? A man might well hesitate and wonder whether there was any good in persevering in a hobby personal to himself." Fortunately in Mr. Huth's case his library descended to his son, Mr. Alfred Henry Huth, who cherished his heritage and added to and strengthened it whenever he could do so. On his death, which occurred October 10, 1910, he directed, by his will, "That if at any time his library should be sold, the person or persons so



JAMES LENOX

only occasionally had an intermittent attack of his old bibliographical fever." Whatever may have been the cause of the abatement of Mr. Lenox's ardor in collecting, it could hardly have been that suggested by Hazlitt when speaking of similar cessations from buying in the case of Henry Huth. Mr. Lenox was a bachelor, Mr. Huth, on the contrary, was a man with a family, a fact which makes all the difference in the world. Mr. Hazlitt says: "Mr Huth was not only vacillating in his pursuit of books, and so missed many which he ought to have secured, but his health began to fail some time prior to his decease. . . . I suspect that the cause of wavering was one which is common to so many collectors in all departments, and leads in a majority of instances to the abrupt dispersion of the property. I allude to the almost ostentatious indifference of relatives and friends to the treasures, unless, perhaps, they are pictures or china, which a man gathers round him. In this instance £120,000 [\$600,000] had been expended in books, mss, drawings and prints, and the worthy folks who came to the house, what did they know about them? what did they care? A man might well hesitate and wonder whether there was any good in persevering in a hobby personal to himself." Fortunately in Mr. Huth's case his library descended to his son, Mr. Alfred Henry Huth, who cherished his heritage and added to and strengthened it whenever he could do so. On his death, which occurred October 10, 1910, he directed, by his will, "That if at any time his library should be sold, the person or persons so

selling it 'should forthwith deliver to the Trustees of the British Museum before such sale shall actually take place such 50 volumes as the Trustees of the British Museum shall in their uncontrolled discretion select'. . . . Further provisions required that the volumes selected should be marked with the words 'Huth Bequest,' and that a separate catalogue of them should be printed by the Trustees of the British Museum." "Fifty volumes"! I fancy I hear someone say, "not a very generous bequest." But wait a moment, my friend, and listen to the sequel. It having been decided to sell the library, the Trustees of the British Museum made their choice and have, in accordance with the provisions of the will, printed a catalogue, in which we read: "It is no exaggeration to say that we must go back more than sixty years, to the Grenville bequest of 1846, to find a benefactor to whom the Library of the British Museum, i.e., the combined Departments of Manuscripts and Printed Books, owes so deep a debt of gratitude as that which is due from it to the memory of Alfred Huth."

This circumstance calls our attention to another point to be noticed regarding book-collectors as a class. We refer to the fact that book-collecting is generally the pursuit of a single individual or generation; and that the fate of almost every collection is determined by the death of him who made it. On his demise his heirs, as a rule, indeed almost invariably, proceed to realize upon it by placing it on sale in one of the many book-

auction houses to be found in every large city or by selling it entire to some institution or collector.

There have been hereditary collections, mostly, be it said, in the older and more established countries of Europe, which have descended from father to son or to other legal heirs; but they are of a limited number, in comparison with those which, sooner or later, have passed from the possession of the family.

One of the most famous hereditary collections, that of the Spencers, at Althorp, amounting in 1892 to some 41,500 volumes, was in that year transferred from the Spencers to Mrs. John Rylands who removed it to Manchester there to form a memorial to her husband under the name of The John Rylands Library. The collection of Americana formed by four generations of the Brown family, in Providence, Rhode Island, of which John Carter Brown was the virtual founder, has, under the provisions of the will of his son, John Nicholas Brown, been transferred in trust to Brown University as a perpetual memorial to his father. In accordance with the same instrument a building has been erected for its preservation and a fund of \$500,000 set aside for its maintenance, administration, and increase. In fact everything that human foresight can devise has been done to place this inestimably valuable collection upon a permanent and lasting basis, so that when in the course of time the millennial anniversary of the discovery of the Western Hemisphere shall roll round it will then, perhaps

more than now, be the Mecca to which students of American history will resort in order to consult the original sources of the early history of our continent.

Our imagination sometimes delights to linger over the bibliographic page and fancy what might have been had circumstances been different from what they were. Momentarily we have in mind another hereditary library, the foundation of which was laid between 1610 and 1650 by Sir Robert Gordon (*b.* 1580, *d.* 1656), a contemporary of the Elizabethan dramatists. Sir Robert was a man of eminent literary and political abilities. "He laid by," says Burton, "heaps of the pamphlets, placards, and other documents of his stormy period; and thus many a valuable morsel, which had otherwise disappeared from the world, left a representative in the Gordonstoun collection." A catalogue of this curious library, drawn up by Gordon himself, was published in 1816, when the collection was sold at auction by Cochrane. Richard Grant White points out as "worthy of remark that this library was barren of Shakespeare's works, although it was collected by a gentleman of wealth and of curious as well as literary taste, at a time when the now [1863] almost priceless quartos might have been bought for a shilling." Imagination is staggered to think what prices would be realized if Gordon and his descendants had carefully bought and preserved in their pristine condition all of the editions of Shakespeare's poems and plays as they came from the press and had placed them under the auctioneer's hammer during this year of grace 1915.

Of hereditary collections now in the hands of the descendants of their collectors, or of their legal representatives, the best known are those of Earl Crawford and the Christie-Miller or Britwell Library.

Of the latter little-known library we cannot refrain from adding a few words in passing. The library now at Britwell Court, near Burnham, in Buckinghamshire, was begun by William Henry Miller as early as 1819, when, as Hazlitt informs us, he was found bidding "for books of price against all comers." Miller was very particular respecting the condition of his purchases, especially of their size. He was accustomed to carry about with him a foot-rule with which to measure the height of any book that came under his notice, a habit which won for him among collectors the name of "*Inch-rule* or *Measure* Miller." His short copies he often replaced with taller ones. During his lifetime he made additions to the library from all the important sales of the first half of the nineteenth century. On his death, which took place near Edinburgh, Britwell Court and the library were bequeathed to his cousin Miss Marsh from whom they passed to Samuel Christy, the Piccadilly hatter, who assumed the name of Christie-Miller. On his death they became the property of Wakefield Christie-Miller who died in 1898.

Since the death of the founder, in 1848, many important additions have been made "from the Corser, Laing, and other sales of more recent years," those made by its

last owner being especially important. Notable among these is a large portion of the Elizabethan rarities discovered, in 1867, at Lamport Hall, the seat of Sir Charles Isham. It now stands unrivaled among English private libraries for the number, rarity, and condition of its examples of early English and Scottish literature. It is especially rich in English poetry and contains the greater part of the Heber collection of ballads and broadsides. "At the Heber sale, this gentleman," says Hazlitt, "saw his opportunity, and used it well. The bibliophobia had set in; prices were depressed, so far as the English poetry was concerned, and Thorpe the bookseller, under his instructions, swept the field—the Drama, the Classics, and the Miscellanea he left to others. Nearly the whole of the rarities in that particular division, set forth in the second, fourth, sixth, and eighth parts of the catalogue, fell to Mr. Miller; and of many no duplicates have since occurred. The purchaser must have laid out thousands, and have added to his collection positive cartloads." The unusual opportunity *Measure* Miller was so prompt to seize and benefit by was not unlike that which, in these latter days, has fallen to the lot of Mr. Huntington in the dispersal of the Hoe and Huth collections. The similarity, however, ceases when we compare the prices Miller paid at the Heber sale with those that have prevailed during the last few years. Information regarding the volumes in this "rather jealously-guarded repository," the Britwell Library, is difficult to obtain as we are able to testify, it being one of the exceptionally few libraries

which declined to answer, or rather ignored repeated letters applying for information to be used in the Church Catalogue. The best printed sources respecting it we have found in Hazlitt's series of *Bibliographical Collections and Notes* and in Fletcher's *English Book Collectors*.

Mention has been made of Frederick Locker-Lampson, the author of *London Lyrics* and other *vers de société*. Obligated at an early age to abandon business, he devoted the rest of his life to self-culture as a virtuoso and book-lover. He went much in society and enjoyed the friendship of many distinguished persons of all classes. He knew Lord Tennyson, Thackeray, Lord Houghton, Lord Lytton, George Eliot, Dickens, Trollope, Dean Stanley (his brother-in-law), Hayward, Kinglake, Cruikshank, Du Maurier, and many others and had met and conversed with almost every distinguished contemporary of his day. He was an alert and enthusiastic collector. Hazlitt says he "might have been occasionally seen at an early hour walking up and down on the pavement, awaiting the arrival of some bookseller, in whose brand-new catalogue had appeared a nugget to his taste." He tells us in his autobiography, entitled *My Confidences*, published after his death, how he formed the nucleus of his library by collecting "little volumes of poetry and the drama from about 1590 to 1610." To these he subsequently added rare editions of Sidney, Spencer, Churchyard, Middleton, Herbert, Herrick, Dekker, Chapman, and many other writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth

centuries, including a considerable number of the quarto editions of Shakespeare's poems and plays. The latter, as we have already seen, attracted the attention of Mr. Church and induced him to purchase the entire collection when the exigencies of the Locker-Lampson family required that they should part with it. The Rowfant library was also rich in first editions of the Victorian poets, many of them with autograph inscriptions from their authors to the collector himself, and in autograph letters, pictures, and drawings. The transfer of the entire library to this country, as usual, whenever any literary treasures are brought here, elicited much comment and protest among English book-lovers. According to the *London Standard*, Sir Sidney Lee, the well-known Shakespearian scholar, is said to have remarked in a speech: "On the adverse side of any account, which appraised the public interest taken at the moment in Shakespeare in this country, must be set the recent triumphs of American collectors in stripping this country of rare early editions of Shakespeare's plays and poems—editions which had long been regarded among its national heirlooms. The unique first Quarto of 'Titus Andronicus,' which had lately been discovered in Sweden, was promptly secured at an enormous price by an American enthusiast. More lamentable was the sudden flight to the shop of a bookseller in New York of the surpassingly rich library of the late Mr. Locker-Lampson, of Rowfant.

"At one fell swoop the country has been deprived by this transaction of as many as twenty-seven copies of

lifetime editions of Shakespeare's plays, with much else of almost equal rarity and interest. Never in the history of English book-collecting had this country lost suddenly and secretly such a treasure of Shakespeariana, although some inferior stores of Shakespeariana had suffered the like experience. Before the officers of any public institution like the British Museum or the Bodleian Library, before any private English collector had any suspicion of their impending fate, those Rowfant volumes crossed the Atlantic, never in all probability to return.

"While we admired the superior enterprise of the American collector, we could not but grieve over the insensibility of our own rich men, who allowed these heirlooms to leave our shores without making any effort to retain them here." If the loss to England of the Rowfant Folio and Quartos, following as it did the mysterious disappearance of the Warwick Collection, was able to throw Sir Sidney Lee into a state of mind which provoked the above utterance, we leave it to our readers to imagine the frenzy into which he must have been thrown when he first learned that the Huth and then the Devonshire Collections had followed those previous emigrants across the Atlantic. These constantly increasing changes of habitat among bibliographical rarities conclusively prove that Englishmen value their sovereigns more than their literary treasures.

The transfer, above referred to, of the Warwick Collection of Shakespeare Folios and Quartos to our shores

has been characterized by a well-known English bibliographer as "a shame-faced affair," in which the mouths of all those cognizant of it were sealed to secrecy. Enough shreds of evidence have, however, leaked out to prove satisfactorily that the hand which reached across the Atlantic and seized the unique first edition of "Titus Andronicus," discovered at Lund, Sweden, in January, 1905, also added the Warwick Collection to the spoils which its owner now regards "as the finest library of Shakespeariana in America, comprising some 20,000 vols."

In 1886 Locker-Lampson privately printed a catalogue of his treasures, which was preceded by an introduction by himself and several short poems by his friends, among others one of several charming stanzas by Andrew Lang, in which he sings the praises of the library. The second stanza runs thus:

The Rowfant books! In sun and snow
They're dear, but most when tempests fall;
The folio towers above the row
As once, o'er minor prophets,—Saul!
What jolly jest books, and what small
"Dear dumpy Twelves" to fill the nooks.
You do not find in every stall
The Rowfant books!

In 1900 an Appendix to the Catalogue, containing additions to the collection, was issued by Mr. Godfrey Locker-Lampson. To this Mr. Lang again contributed

some verses praising the son for sharing the tastes of his father, as follows:

How often to the worthy Sire,
Succeeds th' unworthy son!
Extinguished is the ancient fire,
Books were the idols of the Squire,
The graceless heir has none.

To Sotheby's go both old and new,
Bindings, and prose, and rhymes,
With Shakespeare as with Padeloup
The sportive lord has naught to do,
He reads *The Sporting Times*.

Behold a special act of grace,
On Rowfant shelves behold,
The well-loved honours keep their place,
And new-worn glories half efface
The splendours of the old.

It has been remarked that when a book-collector prints a catalogue its appearance is likely sooner or later to be followed by the sale of his library. Whether such be the case or not, it at least indicates that the collector has so far realized his bibliographical ambitions as to consider his collection reasonably complete and that future accessions to it will be few and comparatively unimportant. The collector is by nature prudent, not to say secretive, in disposition and is not given to taking the public into his confidence, especially as by so doing he would in a great measure thwart his own ends. For

the publication of a catalogue not only discloses what he already possesses; but, to his rivals, and especially to dealers, the gaps in his collection, and the unscrupulous are ever ready to profit by such disclosures. Hence it is that the publication of a catalogue is a virtual admission that the collector has withdrawn from the field. Such a step, when taken by collectors, with this understanding, is, no doubt, a wise one for several reasons. First, the catalogue, when properly prepared, serves as a contribution to knowledge by imparting information of a special nature concerning the literature of the subject which forms the basis of the collection; again it serves to inform scholars, as well as other collectors, where certain literary or bibliographical rarities may be found; and finally in case the collection should be dispersed, as past bibliographical history demonstrates is too often the common fate, the publicity given to the collection by its catalogue is more than likely to increase at its sale the number of competitors for its treasures, and so add largely to the amount realized; nor is it to be wondered at that the expense attending the preparation and printing of the catalogue itself may often in consequence be more than reimbursed.

Andrew Lang's verses in the Appendix to the Rowfant Catalogue are, as we have seen, delightfully expressed and convey an exquisite compliment, but unfortunately he failed to take into account a very important contingency. It sometimes happens that the cultivated tastes of the father are inherited by his son and that the latter instinctively takes up the work where the former

dropped it and carries it on in such wise as to add further luster to the family name, as we have seen was done by the Browns in Providence; but, unhappily, family exigencies arise that call for a sacrifice of tastes; for a parting with the luxuries of life to meet its necessities. Such a consideration is far from poetical, and had the writing of Lang's verses been deferred for a little the collector's family would have been spared the poignant pain elicited by perusing this poem and the world would probably never have enjoyed the pleasure of reading the noble sentiments so delicately expressed in these graceful lines.

The Rowfant Catalogue, as has already been observed, gave to Mr. Church the idea of adding to his own collection its Shakespearian treasures, and a few others, thereby giving it world-wide celebrity.

No matter how arduously or successfully the book-collector pursues his quarry, the time inevitably comes when he must give o'er the chase. The history of book-collecting shows that while by far the greater number of private collections have been dispersed, a very considerable number have in one way or another passed, wholly or partially, into the possession of public libraries. Edward Edwards at the end of his *Free Town Libraries* gives a list of over one thousand private collections, most of which have found a final resting-place in public libraries. This list naturally includes only the most prominent ones, there being many of smaller private collections, mentioned in his other works relating to libraries, that

have also become integral parts of public collections but which he did not consider of sufficient importance to include in the list just mentioned.

The question naturally arises, How are public libraries benefited by the accumulation of private collections formed by the bibliomaniac, the book-collector, the dilettanti, the scholar, and the more modest lover of books? The tendency of the present day, as it has ever been, is for rare and costly books to gravitate toward public libraries. Dealers and bibliophiles recognize this fact as the primary cause for the increasing scarcity and consequent rise in prices of all kinds of book rarities. Many a collector ambitious to make a complete collection in some branch of literature, history, or art is confronted with the unwelcome information that of certain editions or books necessary for the completion of his collection but a single copy is in existence and that is locked up in a public collection so that it can never be met with in the open market. Many such unique copies, once the chief treasures of private collections, have at last found their way into public libraries.

Book-collectors are, either directly or indirectly, of benefit to public libraries in a variety of ways. Direct benefactions by book-collectors to libraries take a variety of forms: (1) by founding libraries or other institutions in which a library is an essential feature; (2) by aiding in the founding of libraries or of such institutions; or (3) by aiding libraries already in existence.

The best example of the founding of a library is that in which (a) a collection of books conspicuously important or complete in some particular field of knowledge or as an all-round collection is donated to form the nucleus of a library; for which (b) a suitable and appropriate building, capable of all necessary future extensions, is provided for its preservation and protection, and (c) for the adequate maintenance, administration, and growth of these, an ample income is perpetually assured by a safely invested and permanent fund. Without attempting to name more than a few examples of such libraries as fall under this and the foregoing divisions, the John Carter Brown, Lenox, and the Hispanic Society libraries seem good examples in which all these conditions have been met.

To the class of libraries which have been built up from liberal endowments belong such as the Astor, Newberry, John Crerar, and Enoch Pratt libraries. The funds being provided, the collections of books and buildings follow as a natural consequence.

The Blackstone Memorial Library, at Branford, Connecticut, is an instance in which a building was erected and funds provided for the formation of a library. Other examples of the same kind will no doubt occur to the reader. The erection of a building by a donor with the understanding or condition that others provide the library and maintain it, the Carnegie method, more properly belongs to our second class—aid in the founding of libraries.

The founders of the Leland Stanford and Cornell universities, the Pratt Institute, and such other institutions as require a library in order to properly carry out the purposes of their existence may also be classed among library benefactors.

Another class of library benefactors is composed of those book-collectors and book-lovers who afford aid during the formation of a public library. An example falling within this category is that of Joshua Bates, the London banker, who, learning that a public library was to be started in Boston, gave \$50,000 as a fund on condition that the interest be expended for books. He afterward donated 30,000 volumes, equal in value to his previous gift, which formed a part of the library in the Upper Hall when it was opened to the public in 1861. After his death in 1864 its name was, in his honor, changed to that of Bates Hall.

The classes of benefactions just named, excepting the first in which the collection of some collector is employed as the nucleus of a new library, apply more particularly to book-lovers in general than to book-collectors as such. The latter, using the term in its usually restricted sense, are more prone to assist existing libraries than to found or to aid new ones. This is no doubt accounted for by the fact that their time and energies are for the most part engaged in amassing their collections, the question of its final disposition, if the thought enters into their minds at all, being deferred for later consideration.

The gift made by Edward Capell, the Shakespearian commentator, of his collection of Shakespearian Folios and Quartos to Trinity College, Cambridge, during his lifetime, seems on the whole quite ideal. In such a case the collector enjoys the satisfaction of seeing his library placed where he most desires to see it and under conditions and restrictions mutually acceptable to donor and recipient. The former is, furthermore, saved any anxiety, lest his wishes regarding its ultimate disposition should fail to be carried out by his heirs or legal representatives. The gift of the Old Royal Library of the Kings of England, made by George II. to the British Museum, may perhaps be considered as falling within this description. By this important donation the Museum came into possession, among a host of other rarities, of the *Codex Alexandrinus*, the youngest of the three earliest known manuscripts of the Bible; a long series of the early English chronicles; the autograph manuscript of *Basilicon*, written by Prince Henry; and a choice collection of books printed on vellum by Anthony Vêrard of Paris and presented by him to King Henry VII.

The form in which by far the greater number of private libraries find their way into public collections is by bequest. This form of gift is no doubt due to the feeling naturally entertained by every collector who would like to have his collection preserved as he formed it, together with such additions as may subsequently be added to make it more complete. Corroboration of this view is given by what we read in the lives of many

collectors who continued their pursuit of book rarities up to the very end of their lives. It is to this large class of gifts that public libraries are indebted for many of their most valuable and prized acquisitions. The private collector possesses an advantage over the public library inasmuch as he is able to confine his pursuit to a restricted field of his own choice. The public library, *au contraire*, is compelled to cater to readers in all fields of literature, science, art, history, *et cetera*, and to provide for their use many expensive works of reference. Being, too, as a rule, hampered by restricted means, it cannot specialize on any particular subject. Few, indeed, are the public libraries that would be justified, for instance, in buying all the different editions of any single author, as Rossetti did those of Petrarch, unless it were endowed with a fund especially devoted to that purpose. After all, the book-collector does this work so much better and more thoroughly than any librarian can ever hope to do it that the latter should be content to aim at building up a well-rounded collection in his library, specializing, if at all, only in those branches for which there is a call because of local conditions. At the same time he should neglect no opportunity of using his influence with any book-collectors with whom he may be acquainted to induce them to donate their collections, if suitable, to his own library. In this respect he cannot follow a better example than that of Panizzi, the librarian of the British Museum, who did much through his friendship with Thomas Grenville to influence him to leave his invaluable collection to the British nation.

The indirect benefits which accrue to libraries from the collections of book-collectors are various. Though the collector makes no provision for the disposition of his treasures after they have passed beyond his control, yet there have been numerous instances in which the public has benefited greatly. The pleasure of the chase, much more than acquisition, forms, if we may believe human nature, the chief enjoyment of the collector. No sooner is one nugget bagged than it is well-nigh forgotten in the all-absorbing excitement accompanying the discovery of another prize upon whose capture the very honor of his collection seems to him to depend. Your true collector scorns the idea of bringing together a library with the expectation of ultimately reaping a profit on his outlay by its final disposal. Into it have gone experience, expert knowledge, the energy and watchfulness of years, and many other mental qualities upon which no monetary value can by any possibility be placed. Hence it is that the pecuniary value of a collection can by no means be gauged by the amount it has cost or what it will bring at public sale even under the most favorable circumstances.

It is because of these reasons that a collection, which will fit into or supplement the books on the shelves of a library, should, other conditions being favorable, be purchased outright by its authorities.

Public libraries able to do this are not numerous: on the contrary, it more often happens that, recognizing the desirability of possessing such a collection that has come into the market or can be procured by private negotiations, well-wishers of the library or its authorities

persuade one or more of its friends to purchase the collection and donate it to the library. The Thomason collection of tracts relating to the English Revolution (1640-1663) was bought from Thomason's ultimate successors in 1762, nearly a hundred years after his death, by King George III., and by him presented to the British Museum. This collection contained 33,000 pamphlets bound in 2,200 volumes and is a vast and invaluable storehouse of information regarding the history of those turbulent times.

It sometimes happens that a private collection is given to a library not by the collector himself but by his heirs or descendants some years after his death. The libraries of Increase and Cotton Mather, father and son, two distinguished divines and voluminous authors, were the earliest ones formed in Massachusetts and contained many notable manuscripts. They descended to Mrs. Hannah Mather Crocker, a member of the family, who through the instrumentality of Isaiah Thomas, of Worcester, Massachusetts, presented them to the American Antiquarian Society, of which he was the founder.

As already intimated, many private libraries are constantly being dispersed in the numerous book-auction rooms in our large cities. Scarcely a day passes during the season, extending from early autumn until late in the spring, when sales are not taking place in Boston, New York, or Philadelphia, in London or in Paris, and often sales are being carried on simultaneously. That

dealers and collectors may keep track of the prices at which these are sold there have been issued annually for many years in New York and in London volumes giving the prices of all books bringing more than \$3.00 or £1, respectively.

The dispersal of private collections at these sales is an indirect if not a positive benefit to public libraries. As the auctioneers desire to give as much publicity as possible to these sales, catalogues are sent to all prospective customers, libraries included. By this means librarians are enabled to secure many desiderata either by filing their bids with the auctioneers, their booksellers, or with some of the many accredited persons who make it their business to attend these sales and buy on commission for their patrons. In this way books are frequently secured at prices much below those they would have to pay second-hand booksellers, and so it is that libraries receive a direct benefit from the dispersal of a book-collector's library. The auction-room at the Brinley sales presented an unusual spectacle by which the libraries of several colleges were much benefited. Mr. Brinley bequeathed books to the value of \$25,000 to Yale and a number of other colleges, the representatives of which were obliged by the stipulations of his will to be present at the sales and compete with other purchasers. They were required, however, to pay for their purchases only the amount that their specific bequest had been exceeded. This shrewd course resulted in increasing the number of competitors at the sales and, as a conse-

quence, many of the books sold for what were, at the time, record prices. Those prices have, however, been so far exceeded since then that the prices then realized now seem extremely low.

Furthermore, such sales are widely known by dealers, who, as we have seen, make use of them for the replenishment of their stock. Book-collectors themselves, to whom catalogues are sent, also purchase directly for their collections. Books thus pass either into the hands of the dealers, from whom they may be bought by the librarian if he pleases, or into the collection of some other private collector, whose library will inevitably, in time, pass directly into some public library or in its turn be dispersed for the benefit of those into whose hands its separate items may chance to fall.

By leaving a printed catalogue of his library the book-collector, no matter what may be its final disposition, confers a benefit to public libraries as well as to all book-lovers. In so doing he leaves a record of what he has accomplished as a lover and conservator of literature. Not only does he do this but he also makes a contribution to knowledge and to bibliography by publishing a permanent record of what he has been able to rescue of a certain kind of literature from the devastating hands of time. It is safe to say that the collector who has reached a point where he is ready to print a catalogue has formed a collection which, for one reason or another, is worthy of being catalogued. The world is the richer



ROBERT HOE

by reason of the catalogues of the private libraries that have been issued. Among these the most conspicuous are perhaps those of the Grenville, Huth, Locker-Lampson, Hoe, and Church collections.

Much more might be said upon this interesting subject and numerous other examples given to show that the book-collector is the ally and friend of the public library, though at times he seems to stand in the way of its growth. We cannot, perhaps, close these somewhat discursive remarks more appropriately than by quoting once more a passage from Burton's *Book-Hunter*, in which he shows how much the British Museum owes to private collectors for its multitudinous book rarities.

"In the public duty of creating great libraries, and generally of preserving the literature of the world from being lost to it, the collector's or book-hunter's services are great and varied. In the first place, many of the great public libraries have been absolute donations of the treasures to which some enthusiastic literary sportsman has devoted his life and fortune. Its gradual accumulation has been the great solace and enjoyment of his active days; he has beheld it, in his old age, a splendid monument of enlightened exertion, and he resolves that, when he can no longer call it his own, it shall preserve the relics of past literature for ages yet to come, and form a center whence scholarship and intellectual refinement shall diffuse themselves around. We can see this influence in its most specific and material shape, perhaps, by looking round the reading-room of the British Museum—



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that great manufactory of intellectual produce, where so many heads are at work. The beginning of this great institution, as everybody knows, was in the fifty thousand volumes collected by Sir Hans Sloane—a wonderful achievement for a private gentleman at the beginning of the last [eighteenth] century. When George III. gave it the libraries of the kings of England, it gained, as it were, a better start still by absorbing collections which had begun before Sloane was born—those of Cranmer, Prince Henry, and Casaubon. . . . In many instances the collectors, whose stores have thus gone to the public, have merely followed their book-hunting propensities, without having the merit of framing the ultimate destiny of their collections, but in others the intention of doing benefit to the world has added zest and energy to the chase." *Finis coronat opus.*

SYLLABUS

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- II. Book-collecting before the invention of printing. Part the monasteries played. St. Augustine. Theodore of Tarsus. Richard de Bury. Pp. 4-6.
- III. Invention of printing and the dissolution of the monasteries as incentives to book-collecting. Some of the men who saved MSS from the grocer, the tailor, and the goldbeater. Pp. 6-7.
Collectors not often women. Lady Balcarres an enemy of books. Frances Richardson Currer a friend and collector of books. Pp. 7-9.

IV. Motives of collectors.

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